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Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

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**Speaker 1**

**Liam from the United Kingdom**

I live in Manchester, which is probably one of the wettest places in the UK. If I had been brought up somewhere like Saharan Africa, where I had to walk miles each day just to fetch water, I’d obviously be a lot more conscious of water conservation. But I’m afraid I don’t set a very good example – er … I probably waste a lot – leaving the tap running when I brush my teeth and so on. Clearly we’re not going to run out of water in the UK, but I know water conservation is important. If we all used less water, the water companies wouldn’t have to use so much energy treating water to make it clean. And of course that would be more environmentally-friendly.

**Speaker 2**

**Gemal from the United Arab Emirates**

I’m not saying the idea of desalination plants is wrong. If desalination methods didn’t exist, this country would not have been able to develop in the way it has. Nowadays we use water in our homes more or less as we want to. But I don’t think we can continue like this. You see, the waste from the desalination process is a kind of brine with a dangerously high salt content … which will eventually destroy life in the sea. I am interested in discovering farming techniques that use salt water. There are grasses and other types of plant that can grow with sea water. If we were to use more of these, it would give our natural fresh water springs a chance to recharge.

**Speaker 3**

**Daniel from the United States**

Americans (and I’m as guilty as the rest) use water like there is no tomorrow. I think it’s well-known that the Colorado River doesn’t reach the sea anymore. If you had visited the area around the old delta in Mexico 100 years ago – rich wetlands, full of wildlife – you’d be shocked to see it now. It’s all dried up … a kind of salt flat. The reason is agriculture. The river has been dammed and diverted in various places along its route to irrigate fields and provide enough water for people living in the desert areas of Nevada and California. Unless we change the way we think about water and stop wasting so much, the river will carry on getting smaller.

Life

**Speaker 4**

**Carmen from Mexico**

My water needs are the same as most people’s, I think: I have a small vegetable garden; I have to wash myself and my clothes. I don’t have to save water, but I want to, you know. I collect rainwater for the garden, I fill a basin to wash in rather than running the tap, I wash my dishes every other day. But now governments are discussing big projects for transporting water from one part of the world to another using huge pipes and tankers. I think if more people thought and acted like me, things would not have come to this point, you know.